

TOWN OF WOODRUFF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

AMENDED OCTOBER 28, 2025



Prepared by:
Town of Woodruff Comprehensive Plan Commission

TOWN OF WOODRUFF, WI

PLANNING COMMISSION

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This plan was amended by the Town of Woodruff Comprehensive Planning Commission & Woodruff Town Board in conjunction with the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan.

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The Planning Process

The initial Comprehensive Plan for Town of Woodruff was completed in 2013 in participation with the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan development program with the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

The Town Plan Commission oversaw the development of the initial plan and met to analyze and discuss information that was gathered. The planning process was open to the public and the town's adopted Public Participation Program and documentation of comprehensive plan adoption are in the Attachments. In 2025, the town chairman appointed the five citizen members of the town to serve as the plan commission, which were approved by the town board.

The 2025 update to the plan was completed in conjunction with Oneida County, the town board and plan commission and included a review of all plan goals and objectives. Census data, maps and other data sources have been reviewed and updated.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of this plan is to comply with the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Law, Statute 66.1001. This plan addresses the elements and factors spelled out in the "definition" of a comprehensive plan under the statute.

This plan is intended to be a guide for the future development of the town, not only for the Town of Woodruff as a town comprehensive plan but also for Oneida County as part of the Oneida County Comprehensive Plan.

Data Sources

Official sources used for data and forecasting include the WDOA Demographic Service Center, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Wisconsin Department of Administration and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Revenue, and Oneida County.

CHAPTER 1: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Town of Woodruff is an unincorporated rural town in northwestern Oneida County with a northern border neighboring Vilas County. It is adjacent to the communities of Minocqua, Lake Tomahawk, and Newbold in Oneida County, and Arbor Vitae and Lac du Flambeau in Vilas County.

Two influences that define the community are the major crossroads of U.S. Highway 51 and Wisconsin State Highway 47, and the land dominance of the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest. As a result, the greatest concentration of commercial and residential development in Woodruff is found in the narrow "panhandle" bordered by the communities of Minocqua to the south, and Arbor Vitae to the north, and bisected by highways 51 and 47.

The majority of the town lies within the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest (72%). Another 20% of the town is covered by water including Tomahawk Lake (3,392 acres) along the southeastern border running parallel to Highway 47, Clear Lake,

Hasbrook Lake, Gilmore Lake, Buffalo Lake, and Mid Lake fully contained within the community and several other smaller lakes. Two regional medical facilities, churches and several other non-profit and municipal buildings, leave approximately 3% of the available land within Woodruff as revenue bearing.

Despite the handicap of limited taxing ability, Woodruff is known for the quality of its town roads, professionalism of its police department and volunteer fire department, and excellent medical facilities. Construction of new town facilities in 2007 established a new town center and offered opportunities for commercial growth.

Woodruff's location as the center of year-round recreational opportunities with ready access to natural resources requires a balanced approach to development. New residential development is limited by land constraint and density management, but remains a priority to meet the growing demand for reasonably-priced housing for a large retirement-age demographic.

DEMOGRAPHICS:

Population

Between 2000 and 2020, Woodruff added 62 residents, reflecting a 3.1% increase, which is higher than Oneida County, but lower than the State of Wisconsin.

Table 1: Population Trends					
	2000	2010	2020	Net Change 2000-2020	% Change 2000-2020
Town of Woodruff	1,982	2,055	2,044	62	3.1%
Oneida County	36,776	35,998	37,845	1069	2.9%
Wisconsin	5,363,675	5,686,986	5,893,718	530,043	9.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Trends

In 2000, 1,982 people lived in Woodruff. Between the 2000 Census and the 2010, the Town of Woodruff's population increased by 4%, however population decreased by .9% from 2010 to 2020. Oneida County grew slightly slower than Woodruff, but the State of Wisconsin grew 9.9%. Woodruff added 62 people from 2000 to 2020. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, 2,044 people live in Woodruff.

Table 1-2: Persons 17 Years of Age and Younger

	2000	2010	2021	% of Total 2000	% of Total 2010	% of Total 2021
Town of Woodruff	432	349	266	21.8%	17.0%	15.2%
Oneida County	8,203	6,640	6,563	22.3%	18.4%	17.5%
Wisconsin	1,368,756	1,339,492	1,292,944	25.5%	23.6%	22%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Oneida County

In 2000, Woodruff has experienced a steady decline in population of persons 17 years of age and under, demonstrating a 48% decline, from 432 in 2000 to 266 in 2021. This mirrors corresponding decreases in this age population in Oneida County and across the State of Wisconsin.

Table 1-3: Persons 65 Years of Age and Older

	2000	2010	2021	% of Total 2000	% of Total 2010	% of Total 2021
Town of Woodruff	475	585	558	24.2%	28.5%	31.8%
Oneida County	6,884	7,800	9,749	18.7%	21.7%	26.0%
Wisconsin	702,553	777,314	997,078	13.1%	13.7%	17.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Oneida County

During the same period, Woodruff's population of individuals 65 and older increased by 83 residents, and went from accounting for 24.2% of population to 31.8% of population. Oneida County and the State of Wisconsin demonstrated increased numbers and percentages in this age population as well.

The trend towards an older population is mainly due to the aging of the Baby Boomers, the largest generation in American history and retirees moving into the region. Based on increases in life expectancy and advances in medicine, in conjunction with the excellent medical facilities available in Woodruff, the 65 and older group can be expected to grow in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the total population in future years.

Household Trends

In 2000, 866 households made up the Town of Woodruff. Number of households increased to 948 in 2010, but decreased in 2020 to 814, which reflects a 6% decrease in households from 2000 to 2021.

Table 1-4: Households

	Total 2000	Total 2010	Total 2021	2000-21 Net Change	2000-21 % Change
Town of Woodruff	866	948	814	-52	-6%
Oneida County	15,333	16,003	15,724	391	2.6%
Wisconsin	2,084,544	2,279,768	2,401,818	317,274	15.2%

Source: US Census, and WDOA Demographic Services Center

Oneida County mirrors the same trend of increased households in 2010, but decreased in 2021, while the State of Wisconsin increased both decades.

Education Levels

Over the past two decades, the percentage of town residents 25 and older who have a high school diploma or higher has been increasing, reaching 93.5% in 2021, which is higher than the State of Wisconsin. Percentage of town residents with a bachelor degree or higher also steadily increased from 14.5% in 2000 to 19.9% in 2021, but this percentage is lower than the county and state percentages.

Table 1-5:

Education Levels

	Town of Woodruff		Oneida County		State of Wisconsin	
	20 00	202 1	200 0	2021	2000	20 21
% of Residents 25 and Older with High School Diploma	83.3%	93.5%	85.1%	94.7%	85.1%	92.9%
% of Residents 25 and Older with Bachelor Degree	14.5%	19.9%	20.0%	26.8%	22.4%	31.5%

Source: Oneida County

Employment

In 2021, there were 794 residents employed within Woodruff, which is 104 less than in 2000. This is in contrast to the increase in employment for Wisconsin residents, as the Wisconsin residents employed increased by 10.2%. This decrease is likely tied to the aging population and the number of retired residents in Woodruff. When an individual reaches the age group of 55 and older, their probability of participating in the labor force drops significantly.

Table 1-6: Total Employed Persons – Age 16 & Older

	Total 2000	Total 2010	Total 2021	2000-21 Net Change	2000-21 % Change
Town of Woodruff	898	876	794	-104	-11.6%
Oneida County	17,199	17,802	16,968	-231	-1.3%
Wisconsin	2,734,925	2,869,310	3,014,612	279,687	10.2%

Source: Oneida County

Income Levels

In 2000, the median household income for the town was lower than the county and state. By 2021, the median household income for the town increased significantly from 2000 to a number 13% higher than the county level, and 7% higher than the State of Wisconsin.

Table 1-7: Median Household Income

	2000	2010	2021	2000-21 % Change
Woodruff	\$35,335	\$42,306	\$70,208	98.7%
Oneida County	\$37,619	\$45,857	\$62,660	66.6%
Wisconsin	\$43,791	\$51,598	\$67,080	53.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Oneida County

During the past two decades, the town and county's median and per capita incomes grew at a faster pace than the state's rate.

Table 1-8: Per Capita Income				
	2000	2010	2021	2000-21 % Change
Woodruff	\$20,508	\$27,086	\$39,757	93.9%
Oneida County	\$19,746	\$28,085	\$36,689	85.8%
Wisconsin	\$21,271	\$26,624	\$36,754	72.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Oneida County

Chapter 1: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Review of 2020-2025 Planning Issues

Population growth has slowed. Large percentage of town is occupied by state forest, non-profit medical facilities, and churches continuing to limit the tax base and availability of land for development. Population changes over past two decades identifies a decrease in under 17 population and increase in over 65 population.

Review of Demographic Trends

Shifting age structure affects community needs including transportation, housing, elderly care, and schools. Median household income increased significantly exceeding both county and state.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Each of the comprehensive plan chapters will include goals, objectives and policies which will be used to guide the future development of the town. These will be modified if the town's future goals change.

Definitions:

Goals: Broad statements that express general public priorities about how the town should approach development issues during the next 20 years. These goals are based on key issues, opportunities and problems that affect the community.

Objectives: More specific than goals and are usually attainable through planning and implementation activities. Accomplishment of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

Policies: Rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals and objectives. Decision-makers use policies on a day-to-day basis.

CHAPTER 2: NATURAL, AGRICULTURAL, & CULTURAL RESOURCES

This chapter addresses local land and water conditions, as well as agricultural resources and cultural heritage. (See Map 2-1 Natural Resources)

Previous Plans and Studies

Oneida County Land and Water Resource Management Plan 2020-2029

This countywide plan provides a framework for local, state and federal conservation program implementation efforts. This plan is designed to help protect and improve the valuable water and soil natural resources in Oneida County. The plan can be found at www.oclw.org.

Oneida County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023-2027

This countywide plan is current in development to provide continued direction in meeting current and future recreation needs. The plan will include an inventory and analysis of outdoor recreational facilities. Adoption of this plan and subsequent acceptancy by the DNR allows for continued eligibility for financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the Stewardship Fund, and other federal and state funding programs. A copy is available in the Oneida County Forestry Department.

Oneida County Forest Comprehensive Use Plan 2021-2035

The mission of the County Forest is to manage, conserve and protect the natural resources within the county forest on a sustainable basis for present and future generations. The plan contains information about forest resource planning, outdoor recreation planning, silvicultural practices, aesthetic management zones, trails and access control, biological communities, and wildlife species that exist within the county forest. A copy is available in the Oneida County Forestry Department.

Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest Master Plan

NH-AL State Forest encompasses more than 220,000 acres in parts of Vilas, Oneida and Iron counties. A significant portion of land within the Town of Woodruff is part of this state forest. The NH-AL State Forest master plan spells out how the property will be managed, used and developed, how it will look, and the benefits it will provide. It defines the recreational uses, forestry and other land management practices in addition to other aspects of the property's future use and development.

INVENTORY

SURFACE WATER

Surface water resources support the area's economy by drawing tourists, and providing a good quality of life for residents. Oneida County contains one of the highest concentrations of natural lakes in the world.

Woodruff is part of several watersheds. A jagged watershed boundary divides the

town from east to west. The western side is in the Upper Tomahawk River watershed. The northeastern side lies in Sugar Camp Creek watershed, and the southeastern corner lies in the Rhinelander Flowage watershed. All of these watersheds drain into the Mississippi River.

Shoreland zoning is controlled by Oneida County Shoreland Zoning. Actual shoreland jurisdiction measurements are coordinated through the county zoning department. Refer to the Natural Resource Map for water bodies in the town.

Several water bodies within the town are listed as Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) or Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) as defined by the WDNR. ORWs include Clear Lake (T39N R7E Sec 16 area) and Tomahawk Lake (T39N R7E Sec 32 area). ERWs include the Wisconsin River (T39N R7E Sec 36). ORWs and ERWs share many of the same environmental and ecological characteristics. The primary difference between the two is that ORWs typically do not have point sources discharging pollutants directly to the water. In addition, any pollutant load discharged to an ORW must meet background water quality at all times. An Outstanding or Exceptional Resource Water classification gives Wisconsin the authority to limit pollution from grading and dredging on river banks, sewage and industrial sources of pollution, and depletion by high-capacity groundwater wells.

Designation as an ORW also offers some additional increased protections. For example, under Wisconsin's current groundwater law, automatic review of proposed high capacity well permits is only triggered if a water body is designated as a trout stream, ERW, or ORW.

WETLANDS

The wetlands shown for the Town of Woodruff were mapped from the WisDNR Wetlands Inventory, see Natural Resources Map.

FLOODPLAINS

The 100-year floodplain was digitized by the NCWRPC from FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, for planning purposes only, see Department of Natural Resources Map.

GROUNDWATER & GEOLOGY

The majority of the town lies within a glacial drift aquifer, which is the major source of ground water in most of the county. The fractured crystalline bedrock underlying the county is not considered a significant source of water, although locally it provides a small amount for domestic uses.

Groundwater quality in Oneida County and the Town of Woodruff is generally good. The aquifer water principally contains calcium, magnesium, and bicarbonate ions, and a high concentration of iron also exists, but it is not considered a health hazard. In areas with moraines, the aquifer water is hard.

Susceptibility of groundwater to pollutants can be defined as the ease with which a contaminant can be transported from the land surface to the top of the groundwater called the water table. The overlying soil and bedrock materials may allow contaminants to reach the groundwater more easily than in other areas of the state. Groundwater contamination susceptibility in Oneida County is "most susceptible"

based upon soil characteristics, surficial deposits, depth to water table, depth to bedrock, and type of bedrock.

Wellhead protection plans are developed to achieve groundwater pollution prevention measures within public water supply wellhead areas. A wellhead protection plan uses public involvement to delineate the wellhead protection area, inventory potential groundwater contamination sources, and manage the wellhead protection area. A wellhead protection ordinance is a zoning ordinance that implements the wellhead protection plan by controlling land uses in the wellhead protection area.

The Lakeland Sanitary District 1, which serves the town, has a wellhead protection plan, but does not have a wellhead protection ordinance.

AIR QUALITY

The Town of Woodruff is often sought out as a place to live because the air quality is superior to that of cities. The Town of Woodruff does not have industrial smoke stacks or rush hour traffic jams. However, air quality can be compromised during certain times of year by increased seasonal vehicle traffic and indoor/outdoor burning. Burning is an issue regulated by the Department of Natural Resources, which issues burn regulations and determines when and where burning can take place.

FORESTS

A large percentage of land in Woodruff consists of acreage in the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest and is managed under the NH-AL Master Plan. The town also includes one school forest, Arbor Vitae-Woodruff School Forest, consisting of 22 acres, Sec. 20 T39N R7E.

METALLIC & NON-METALLIC MINERAL RESOURCES

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources oversees and regulates mining and mineral exploration. Any new metallic and nonmetallic operations would be subject to Oneida County Zoning and Shoreland Protection Ordinance. All lands within Oneida County are subject to the Nonmetallic Mining Reclamation Ordinance. There are a number of active quarries throughout the Town of Woodruff, as well as a few closed or inactive sites.

PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL AREAS

The town lost 100 percent of farmland acreage on tax rolls between 1990 and 1997. According to the Wisconsin Land Use Databook there were no farms in 1997. Soils classified as "prime farmland" produce the highest yields with minimal inputs and results in the least damage to the environment; see Natural Resource Map for areas of these soil types within the town.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

Contaminated or potentially contaminated sites may require special care and monitoring to prevent further environmental degradation or hazard to human life. The WDNR database, Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) lists a number of sites in Woodruff, all of which are closed (fully remediated) with the exception of one, BRRTS#03-44-000742 Krist Oil/Citgo, 403 Elm Street for

which monitoring is ongoing.

RARE SPECIES & NATURAL COMMUNITIES

The Town of Woodruff has 28 sections with occurrences of endangered resources (rare, threatened, or endangered species of plants & animals, and high-quality natural communities) as identified in the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory. More information is available online at dnr.wi.gov/org/land/er/nhi/CountyMaps/.

Wisconsin's biodiversity goals are to identify, protect and manage native plants, animals, and natural communities, from the very common to the critically endangered. Knowledge, appreciation, and stewardship of Wisconsin's native species and ecosystems are critical to their survival and greater benefit to the community.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

A number of buildings in the town appear on the Wisconsin Architectural History Inventory, including:

- World's Largest Penny Statue (Corner of 3rd Avenue and Hemlock St)
- Dr. Kate Newcomb Museum, 923 2nd Avenue
- Milwaukee Road Depot (T39N R6E Sec 1)—Anthony's Restaurant;
- Howard Young Medical Center (T39N R36E Sec 2);
- Woodruff Fish Hatchery buildings (Timber Rd 0.8 mi S of CTH J);
- Gilmore Dam (CTH E and Gilmore Creek);
- and 5 houses of various styles.

There is a Tomahawk Lake site listed on the Wisconsin and National Registers of Historic Places, but information is restricted because the site may contain prehistoric burials.

Chapter 2: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Promote protection and retention of natural areas (wetlands, lakes and streams, forests and wildlife habitats)

Objectives:

- Promote opportunities that consider both natural resource protection as well as economic development.
- Promote the value of natural resources, campgrounds, trails, beaches, and boat landings, and support opportunities for outdoor recreation development.

Policies:

- Recommend approval for development or commercial/industrial activity only in cases which fully comply with WDNR rules and regulations.
- Ensure town compliance with Department of Natural Resources rules and regulations.
- Support initiatives for development/improvement of outdoor recreational opportunities with local communities and county in keeping with town's interests and financial ability.

Goal 2: Support protection of surface and ground water control.

Objective:

- Support developments that protect groundwater and surface water and reduce potential for contamination or pollution.

Policies:

- Monitor current and potentially hazardous waste contamination within town limits.
- Ensure compliance with Lakeland Sanitary District for new construction.
- Monitor stormwater runoff, making necessary modifications as identified, to streets, parking lots and curbs to ensure appropriate diversion to protect lakes and streams.

Goal 3: Promote scenic, cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.

Objective:

- Support community efforts to protect and preserve scenic, cultural, historic, and archaeological sites.

Policies:

- Promote efforts to maintain, preserve, and celebrate historical and cultural events for town.

CHAPTER 3: HOUSING

This housing chapter is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to provide an adequate housing supply that meets existing and forecasted housing demand. As required by the state's comprehensive planning law [§66.1001 (2)(b) Wis. Stats.], this chapter provides a basic housing stock assessment and identifies policies and programs that promote the development of housing for all residents of the town including a range of choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels, age groups and special needs; that promotes the availability of land for low-income housing; and that maintains the existing housing stock.

Forecasts for housing demand (residential land) are discussed in the Land Use Chapter. The existing residential housing base is shown on the Existing Land Use Inventory Map. The potential future residential housing areas to meet forecasted demand are shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map.

Following tables include housing information from the 2020 U.S. Census. Many of the tables may not fully reflect the unique characteristics of the Town of Woodruff. The community includes both full-time residences, seasonal homes as well as an increasing number of homes used for vacation lodging. The location of housing stock includes homes located on water as well as homes within the downtown area and

dispersed through the multiple wooded areas of the town.

HOUSING ASSESSMENT

1. GENERAL HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

In 2021, there were 1,484 total housing units within the Town of Woodruff, down 2% from 2000. The new housing market slowed considerably following the housing market crash in 2008.

Table 3-1 Housing Units					
	2000	2010	2021	2000-2021 Net Change	2000-2021 % Change
Town of Woodruff	1,515	1,603	1,484	-31	-2.0%
Oneida County	26,627	30,125	30,486	3,859	14.5%
Wisconsin	2,321,144	2,624,358	2,718,369	397,225	17.1%

Source: Oneida County and U.S. Census Bureau

TABLE 3-2 indicates the age of the housing stock in the Town of Woodruff area that is based on the year the structures were built as reported in the 2020 Census. About 10% of Woodruff's housing units were built before 1941. Twenty-two percent of homes were constructed between 2000 and 2009, but new construction during the 2010-19 decade decreased significantly with only 36 new homes being constructed. Approximately 70% of Woodruff's housing is newer than 1970.

The primary factor that resulted in significant decrease in housing growth include the 2008 housing market crash and resulting increase in mortgage rates.

Table 3-2 Year Homes Built						
	Pre-1940 To 1969	1970-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2001-2009	2010-2019
Town of Woodruff	443	316	162	194	333	36
Oneida County	9,502	5,122	4,882	5,165	4276	1471
Wisconsin	1,193,357	386,828	576,822	513,997	317,699	19,006

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

2. OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

TABLE 3-3 breaks down the occupancy status of housing units in the Town of Woodruff. Seasonal homes make up about 39% of the housing units in the town. Both Woodruff and Oneida County reflect a higher percentage of owner-occupied housing, likely due to our rural setting where rental units are less common than in more urbanized areas.

Table 3-3 Residential Occupancy				
	Total Housing Units	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied	% Seasonal
Town of Woodruff	1,484	77.9%	22.1%	38.5%
Oneida County	30,486	83.7%	16.3%	43.3%
Wisconsin	2,718,369	67.4%	32.6%	6.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Lack of affordable rental housing has become an issue for the area as it impacts employment, when potential employees cannot find affordable rental properties. This impacts the area significant during the summer tourist season. The Town of Woodruff offers residents and visitors year-round recreational opportunities with its abundant natural resources and recreational activities. The 2017 Wisconsin Act 59, which prohibits local governments from restricting the rental of single-family homes for seven days or more, has changed the reasons lakefront dwellings are being purchased and developed. These properties are increasingly being operated as lodging facilities instead of seasonal homes.

Although the number of homeless people is not known, a small homeless population does exist in the Town of Woodruff. Social services to assist this population are very limited.

3. VALUE CHARACTERISTICS

The 2000 median housing value, \$101,800, increased by 52% to \$194,500 in 2020. In 2000, Woodruff's median value was slightly less than Oneida County's median, but has increased to 4% higher than that of Oneida County in 2020. Full reassessment of property values is being completed during 2025.

Table 3-4: Owner Occupied Housing Values 2020

	<\$50,000	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 149,999	150,000 to 199,999	200,000 to 299,999	300,000 and up	Median Value
Town of Woodruff	4.4%	2.7%	14.2%	33.1%	18.5%	37.1%	\$194,500
Oneida County	5.7%	14.1%	15.8%	19.3%	21.6%	15.8%	\$186,600
Wisconsin	4.1%	5.9%	10.7%	15.1%	25.5%	38.4%	\$252,800

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Chapter 3: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Encourage housing development that provides a variety of housing choices for all income levels, age groups and people with special needs.

Objectives:

- Encourage and support residential developers to develop affordable housing types for all age groups.
- Encourage appropriate public and private sector development of senior housing, as opportunities present themselves.

Policies:

- Support efforts to develop affordable housing for families and senior citizens.

Goal 2: Support programs to assist residents in maintaining or rehabilitating existing housing units

Objectives:

Encourage services to assist elderly residents to remain in their homes.
Assess and consider regional efforts that come available to provide or promote social services that address housing issues for low-income residents and residents with special needs.

Policies:

Support opportunities for programs for senior citizen assistance

CHAPTER 4: UTILITIES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The fourth chapter addresses utilities and community facilities in the Town of Woodruff. It is based on the statutory requirement for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide future development of utilities and community facilities. As required by the state's comprehensive planning law [s.66.1001 (2)(d) Wis. Stats.], this element inventories existing public utilities and community facilities and assesses future needs for such services including those beyond the control of the Town located outside the community and/or under another jurisdiction. (See Map 4-1 & 4-2 Utilities & Community Facilities.)

INVENTORY & ANALYSIS OF EXISTING FACILITIES

WATER AND WASTEWATER FACILITIES

The Lakeland Sanitary District operates a public water supply system and sanitary sewer service in the Woodruff–Minocqua downtown area. The sanitary system's capacity was expanded in 2007 to nearly double its former capacity, and the area served by the district has been enlarged.

Water supplies outside of downtown are accessed via individual private wells. The drilling, use and abandonment of private water supply wells is regulated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The disposal of wastewater outside of downtown is handled by private on-site septic systems that discharge wastewater to underground drainage fields and which may include: conventional (underground), mound, pressure distribution, at-grade, holding tank, and sand filter systems. These on-site wastewater treatment technologies are regulated by both the Wisconsin Department of Commerce and Oneida County Planning and Zoning.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING FACILITIES

Although the Oneida County Landfill, located in the Town of Woodboro, no longer has active land filling, the site still handles disposal, recycling, and composting of waste within Oneida County. Waste collected at the site is hauled out of the county by a vendor under contract with the County. There is a small demolition waste area on site. There are no plans to reopen/expand landfilling operations, and it is unlikely that Oneida County would develop a new landfill elsewhere.

Private haulers provide "curbside" pick-up of garbage and recycling for residents in the Town of Woodruff on an individual fee basis, or residents can self-haul to the county landfill with a tipping fee. The town does maintain its own brush site on CTH J east of Bass Lake Road.

POWER AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES

Electrical service is provided by Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (WPS). One high-voltage electric transmission line runs from the east and one from the southeast passing through the Northern Highland–American Legion State Forest to converge at State Highway 47 and Mid Lake Road. Three-phase power branches out from a junction of the two high-voltage lines.

The WPS distribution system that provides electricity to the area is located at the northwestern end of the portion of the transmission system known as the "Rhinelander Loop." Demand for electricity in the Woodruff-Minocqua area has been increasing at about 4% per year, and the distribution system needs additional transmission support to maintain local reliability.

Natural gas service exists as provided by WPS. Liquid petroleum (LP gas) is available for home and business delivery from several independent vendors.

Telephone service is provided by Charter Communications and Frontier. Charter also provides cable television and high-speed Internet service. Frontier provides DSL Internet in some areas.

PARKS, RECREATION AND OTHER YOUTH FACILITIES

Brandy Park, located in the Town of Arbor Vitae, is jointly operated by the Town of Arbor Vitae and the Town of Woodruff through the Brandy Park Commission.

Facilities include baseball and soccer fields, basketball, tennis, pickleball and volleyball courts, playgrounds, disc golf, swimming beach, pier, shelter buildings, restrooms, grills, picnic tables, walkways and parking. Across Lemma Creek Road there is a skate board park, and an ice-skating rink with a warming house.

The town's outdoor recreation facilities are augmented by facilities provided by the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest and the local school systems.

The WDNR maintains public campground facilities at Lake Cunard, Carrol Lake, Clear Lake, Tomahawk Lake, and Buffalo Lake within the Town of Woodruff. The Raven Trail system and the Madeline Lake Trail system have groomed cross-country ski trails maintained by the WDNR. Boat landings provided by the WDNR exist on Minocqua, Tomahawk, Clear, Madeline, Carrol, Dorothy, Sweeney, Cunard, Hasbrook, Gilmore, Johnson, and Buffalo lakes.

The Town of Woodruff is part of two school districts: Arbor Vitae-Woodruff School District Pre-K to 8th grade, and Lakeland Union High School. Students may enroll in schools outside the district through the state's open enrollment program.

The Minocqua Public Library serves the town. The library is part of the Wisconsin Valley Library System.

SIDEWALKS/PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS

Woodruff is fortunate to have sidewalks throughout the downtown area. Sidewalks provide a safe place for walking and for children on tricycles, and encourage pedestrian traffic and exercise, and a sense of common space. Many communities do not have any sidewalks, so these are a significant asset for the town.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Police protection in the Town of Woodruff is provided by the Woodruff Police Department with an officer on duty at all times. Police dispatch is operated by the

Minocqua Police Department, and includes a boat patrol, dive team, and a snowmobile patrol.

The Woodruff Volunteer Fire Department is located behind the town hall, and shares a garage with the town road crew. The department has mutual aid agreements with surrounding fire departments including Lake Tomahawk which helps cover the southern part of the town. The town has its own first responder network.

Woodruff is served by two full-service medical facilities. Howard Young Medical Center (HYMC), a 99-bed licensed Aspirus hospital/medical center, is located within the town. This facility provides 24-hour emergency service, urgent care, a critical care inpatient unit, general inpatient beds, a surgical center, and ancillary services. Howard Young Medical Center operates a heliport on its campus, which provides helicopter transport of patients to higher acuity level facilities.

Marshfield Medical Center in Minocqua is a 12-bed hospital/medical center providing 24-hour emergency room, urgent care, obstetrics and delivery services, inpatient beds, surgical services, physician clinic and ancillary services. Marshfield Medical Center operates its own ambulance services for inter-facility transports, and has access to the heliport at Howard Young Medical Center through mutual agreement. Expansion of inpatient bed capability is currently under construction at this site.

Oneida County maintains a countywide ambulance service in conjunction with Howard Young Medical Center and other county hospitals and local communities. The service maintains a number of ambulances with backup. Two of these ambulances are based at Howard Young Medical Center to serve Woodruff and the surrounding area.

OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES/PUBLIC SAFETY

The local road system is the most significant public facility maintained by the town and is covered in the Transportation Element.

The town hall, police department, and community center are all in one building that was constructed on State Highway 47 just east of downtown in 2007. The community center has a 180-person capacity; with restrooms, a full kitchen, and a 15-person conference room that doubles as a storm shelter. In 2025, the community center was renamed the Michael K. Timmons Community Center, after former longtime town chairman and fire chief Mike Timmons, who passed away in March of 2025. The town garage and fire department are located behind the town hall in a separate building also constructed in 2007.

The non-profit, Generations-Lakeland Retirement Foundation, serves seniors from Woodruff and the surrounding area with a variety of programs. Generations is currently fundraising to rebuild a senior center to expand the services they provide to the senior population.

The Dr. Kate Museum and Historical Society is a non-profit facility. The "World's Largest Penny" site is a part of Woodruff's community identity associated with the history of Dr. Kate.

Evergreen Municipal Cemetery in Woodruff is managed and operated by the Town of Woodruff at the intersection of Hwy J. and State Highway 51. Activity is currently in process to digitizing cemetery records to facilitate accuracy of grounds and record keeping. No further sale of lots in Evergreen Cemetery is permitted, however, previously sold lots continue to be accessed for burials and monument placement.

There are two other cemeteries within the Town of Woodruff, St. Patrick Cemetery which is adjacent to Evergreen Municipal Cemetery, run and operated by Holy Family Catholic Church. Forest Garden Memorial Cemetery on Townline Road is owned by the Town of Woodruff, but has been operated privately by a local family since 1976. In 2025, the family requested the town transition Forest Garden Memorial Cemetery to a municipal cemetery operated by the town, and this transition has been initiated.

Annual licensing of dogs residing in Woodruff is required by the Town of Woodruff. The town maintains records of vaccinations for dogs that are licensed. Emergency animal shelter for stray pets is provided by Oneida County Animal Shelter in Rhinelander.

ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE UTILITIES & COMMUNITY FACILITY NEEDS

Town resident's contract for many services from independent vendors such as waste disposal and recycling.

For services directly under the control of the town, including roads, the town prepares regular capital improvements plans and budgets that set timetables to address its equipment and facility needs, based on available funds. The town crew supervisor reports to the town chairperson; board members review the condition of roads annually.

CHAPTER 4: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1. Continue support for existing recreation facilities and assess opportunities for new or expanded activities.

Objectives:

- Continue participation on Brandy Park Commission.
- Ensure new development does not negatively impact existing recreation facilities or natural resources/habitats.
- Assess proposals for new or expanded recreation facilities from the community.

Policies:

- Monitor proposals for new opportunities for recreational activities to ensure compliance with environmental requirements, safety, and community interests.
- Support expansion of community bike trails and other outdoor recreation opportunities.

Goal 2: Coordinate planning of development opportunities with Lakeland Sanitary District and county facilities to ensure appropriate partners are involved in the planning process.

Objectives:

- Continue collaboration with Lakeland Sanitary District and Oneida County,
- and other utility providers
- Support existing facilities/infrastructure to keep pace with the community needs.

Policies:

- New utility, power, and telecommunications systems and infrastructure will be overseen and approved by the Town to ensure location within existing rights-of-way.

Goal 3: Complete implementation of updating cemetery records of Evergreen Cemetery.

Objectives:

- Finalize digital update of cemetery records including plot tracking, and record retrieval.

Policies:

- Ensure town compliance with Wisconsin State statutes regarding cemetery operations.

Goal 4: Complete transition of Forest Garden Memorial Cemetery from private cemetery to municipal cemetery.

Objectives:

- Complete parcel survey and required legal transition documentation to transition Forest Garden to municipal cemetery, and incorporate into town processes.

Policies:

- Ensure town compliance with Wisconsin State statutes regarding cemetery operations.
- Update ordinance to include Forest Garden Memorial Cemetery
- Establish rules and regulations, cemetery lot pricing and procedures for burials and monument placement.

CHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION

This chapter, the third of nine chapters of the Town of Woodruff Comprehensive Plan, is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(c) Wis. Stats.] for a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit,

transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation.

REVIEW OF STATE & REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANS

This section contains a review of state and regional transportation plans and how they affect the Town of Woodruff.

WisDOT Connections 2030 & 2050

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Connections 2030 and 2050 are multi-modal transportation plans focused on long range statewide transportation planning. WisDOT will identify critical priorities and timelines for projects. Recommendations will be presented in "multimodal corridors." The Town of Woodruff is in part of the Wisconsin River corridor (US 51) between Wausau and Ironwood, Mich.

Within this needs-based plan are the following modal plans:

- Active Transportation Plan 2050.
- State Airport System Plan 2030.
- Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020.
- Wisconsin Pedestrian Policy Plan 2020.
- Wisconsin Rail Plan 2050.

State Trails Network Plan

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) plan created in 2001, and updated in 2003, identifies a statewide network of trails and provides guidance to the DNR for land acquisition and development. Many existing trails are developed and operated in partnership with counties. By agreement the DNR acquires the corridor and the county government develops, operates, and maintains the trail.

This plan shows existing trails near Woodruff. The Bearskin State Trail, named for the Bearskin Creek, is an 18-mile former railroad corridor surfaced with compacted granite for walking and bicycling in summer, and snowmobiling in winter. This trail passes in a north-south orientation from Minocqua south to Tomahawk via the Hiawatha Trail, to the south. The Madeline Lake Bicycle and Walking Trail, and the Raven Nature Trail.

The plan includes a web-based maps available on the WiDNR website, as well as an input form which allows the public to share comment and information.

Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans

Oneida County website provides information on five bicycle and walking trails in the Woodruff area.

- Bearskin Trail, Minocqua.
- Madeline Lake Trail, Arbor Vitae.
- Arbor Vitae Bike Trail, Arbor Vitae.
- Raven Nature Trail, Woodruff.
- Lake Tomahawk link to Gritzmachen Road.

A non-profit group, Oneida County Biking and Walking Trails Council, in cooperation with the Oneida County Public Health Department, provides information to the community including web sites, maps, and information on bike and walking trails throughout Oneida County and promotes a healthy, active lifestyle utilizing county trails at bikeoneida.com or oneidacountywi.com. (See Map 5-1 Transportation)

State and county plans, including updates, are accessible on the state and county web pages.

TRANSPORTATION MODE INVENTORY

HIGHWAYS AND TRUCKING

The highway system within the Town of Woodruff is a network of federal, state and county highways along with local roads. WisDOT has jurisdiction over interstate and federal highways, Oneida County has jurisdiction over all county highways. Functional Classification, updated in June 2019, is reflected on attached Map #__ Community Chart C, WisDOT Bureau of Planning and Economic Development. There are no designated state rustic roads within the Town of Woodruff.

USH 51 is designated a Principal Arterial while STH 47 southeast of USH 51 is a Minor Arterial. CTH J, CTH E, CTH D and Mid Lake Road are Major Collectors. Woodruff Road is a Minor Collector. All other roads within the town are classified as local.

Corridors 2020 was designed to enhance economic development and meet Wisconsin's mobility needs well into the future. The 3,200-mile highway network was comprised of two elements: a multilane backbone system and a two-lane connector system. Within Oneida County, USH 8, USH 45 and USH 51 are highways designated as part of the Corridors 2020 system.

The town is served by the network of county trunk highways (CTHs). These roads serve rural land uses and distribute local traffic to the regional arterial system. They serve an important role in linking the area's forestry resources to the major highways and urban centers. The County highways serving the town include CTH D, CTH E, and CTH J.

Town roads are an important component of the county-wide transportation system. Town roads serve local development, as well as the forestry areas. A particular issue of concern with Town roads is that of seasonal weight limits. Forestry activities within the Town make logging trucks a significant concern.

Trucking

USH 51 is the principal truck route within the town as designated by WisDOT. This corresponds with its role as Corridors 2020 connecting route, linking to the Backbone highway system, and facilitating the movement of goods between Oneida

County and the rest of the State and nation. STH 47 is also a state designated truck route within the town.

Local truck routes often branch out from these major corridors to link local industry with the main truck routes as well as for the distribution of commodities within the local area. Mapping these local routes is beyond the scope of this study, and local issues such as safety, weight restrictions, and noise impacts play significant roles in the designation of local truck routes.

TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED

Northwoods Transit provides on demand public transportation services throughout Oneida and Vilas County through the Oneida Vilas Transit Commission. Information is available through northwoodstransit.org.

The Oneida County Department on Aging & Disability Resource Center also coordinates driver-escorted service to residents of Oneida County, which includes Woodruff, providing non-emergency medical transportation to elderly and disabled residents of Oneida County. In addition, independent private non-emergency medical transportation is available within the Oneida County area by private vendors.

Currently, private independent transportation vendors (taxis, ride share services) provide service in the Woodruff area. Availability fluctuates based on the schedules of these independent providers. Scheduled intercity bus service is not available in the area. Private charter/tour bus companies are based in surrounding cities.

BICYCLES, ELECTRIC PERSONAL ASSISTIVE MOBILITY DEVICES AND WALKING

Designated bike and walking trails in the Woodruff area include Madeline Lake Trail and Raven Nature Trail. Oneida County developed a bike route plan (Oneida County Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors Plan, 2002) with assistance from the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. This plan established a number of scenic bike routes throughout the County.

Local community groups have expressed desire to establish additional paved bike trails within Woodruff, which would connect with existing bike trails in surrounding communities. These efforts are being organized and supported by community members.

Two routes partially exist in Woodruff. One route is designed to parallel STH 47 on a former railroad bed. The other route follows CTHs D & E, and then turns into an off-road trail from the junction of CTHs J & E traveling north to the county line.

Within the downtown area safe crossing by bicyclists and pedestrians can be challenging at the intersections of Second Street and USH 51 (near the movie theater), STH 47 at Veteran's Drive (near the post office) and Park Avenue adjacent to Brandy Park. Ramped curbs to accommodate wheelchairs and motorized personal assistive devices have been installed as sidewalk updates are completed.

RAILROADS

There is no rail service in proximity to the Woodruff area. Shipments needing rail service have to be trucked to nearby cities with rail access including Rhinelander, Tomahawk or Wausau.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Air transportation for Woodruff is provided by three primary airports and one private airstrip, known as Dolhun Airport, located near the town's southern border.

Lakeland Airport

The Lakeland Airport/Noble F. Lee Memorial Field is cooperatively owned and operated by the Towns of Woodruff, Minocqua, Arbor Vitae, and Lac du Flambeau and located within the Town of Arbor Vitae.

This transport/corporate airport is intended to serve corporate jets, small passenger and cargo jet aircraft used in regional service and small airplanes (piston or turboprop) used in commuter air service. The airport is served by a full-service fixed base operator and includes single hangars, multi-unit T-hangars, and a terminal building.

Total aviation operations (take-offs and landings) at Lakeland Airport for the 12-month period ending August 2023 was 27,190, an average of 74 per day. Operations are projected to remain stable around 27,000 per year. Expansion of runways is under assessment/consideration. If and when runway expansion is completed, volume of take-offs and landings, projected increases are yet to be determined.

Lakeland Airport is included in the FAA National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems for 2021-2025.

Howard Young Medical Center Heliport

This heliport is for medical use only, located on the Howard Young Medical Center grounds in the Town of Woodruff.

Rhineland/Oneida County Airport

The Rhineland/Oneida County Airport in Rhineland is the closest commercial airport to Woodruff with regular scheduled passenger service.

This airport is an air carrier/air cargo airport, which is designed to accommodate virtually all aircraft. Air carrier enplanements at the Rhineland/Oneida County Airport were 38,925 in 2004 and remained steady through 2007 when the numbers began to decline to 27,494 in 2009. Enplanement continues to fluctuate, with 2014 reflecting a total of 20,545. Currently, only one commercial passenger service operates out of the Rhineland airport.

WATER TRANSPORTATION

There are no harbors or ports within the town, so there is no significant water

transport of passengers or freight. Some of the streams within the town are utilized for recreational activities, but no water trails have been designated.

Chapter 5: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Support and maintain a safe and efficient town road system.

Objectives:

- Continue to work with state and county plans to maintain safe road systems within the town.
- Apply for any appropriate and available funding to facilitate a safe and efficient town road system.

Policies:

- Collaborate with WisDOT, and Oneida County in transportation planning efforts.
- Ensure town roads serving residential areas accommodate access requirements for emergency services, school bus routes, and snowplows.
- Avoid land uses that generate heavy traffic on roads/highways that have not been constructed or upgraded for such use or lack adequate traffic control.

Goal 2: Collaborate with local community groups regarding opportunities to improve or expand recreational activities (bike and walking trails, ATV and/or UTV access)

- Objectives:
- Provide a public forum for discussion regarding usage of public town roads for expanded recreational use.
- Collaborate with community clubs/organizations to promote trails for recreational activities

Policies:

- Ensure appropriate review and research into opportunities for expanded recreational use of town roads to ensure compliance with state and county plans.

CHAPTER 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This chapter analyzes the labor force and economic base, promotes stabilization, retention and expansion of the economic base, evaluates potentially contaminated sites for reuse, and identifies applicable county, regional and state economic development programs.

LABOR FORCE, ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS & ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL CONDITIONS

Labor Force

Projections for population growth over the past 20 years (19%) was not realized, with only 3.1% population growth during this time frame. Unemployment in Oneida County has decreased from 8.2% in July 2009, to an average of 3% during 2023. Local business report ongoing difficulty in recruiting and hiring new staff.

Economic Base Analysis

The town is characterized by residential, commercial and light industrial development in the “panhandle” with the majority of the land covered by the Northern Highlands American Legion State Forest. With 71% of the land in the Town of Woodruff occupied by forests (woodland) and unavailable for development economic, development is at a premium in the Town of Woodruff. A strong economic base will provide the higher quality of life and increased incomes for individuals and revenue for businesses will benefit the town by increasing the tax base.

Assessment of Local Conditions

Based on the limited availability of commercial space, redevelopment of the existing downtown becomes an important focus for the town. The town desires family-oriented entertainment and services, restaurants and small retail shops that serve both tourism and local needs. Beyond this, other specific preferences for categories or types of business desired include: low-impact technology-based enterprises and other non-industrial type businesses.

The town has a number of strengths that are helpful in attracting and retaining businesses. These include quality of life factors, low crime rates, recreational opportunities and potential economic development in the downtown area.

Some weaknesses in attracting or retaining businesses and industry include: distance to metro-areas, limited skilled workforce, competition with neighbors for tourism dollars, lack of available sites for development, non-resident ownership of many properties, high land values and transportation issues.

The area around the town hall presents a location for town-center type development while space along County J provides a location for highway commercial type uses. The Future Land Use Map (see Chapter 8) identifies areas planned for potential commercial use in the Town of Woodruff.

Chapter 6: GOALS, OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

Goal 1: Support efforts to stabilize and expand the economic base and employment opportunities for the community.

Objectives:

- Promote the expansion of new business opportunities that will enhance the “northwoods” character

- Encourage expansion of technology infrastructure to support new business development.
- Collaborate with Oneida County and other local towns to promote economic development.

Policies:

- For consideration of new business, evaluate noise, traffic, odors, lighting and environmental issues as part of assessment process
- Involve local chamber of commerce and connecting town governments, as appropriate, in review of potential economic development.

Goal 2: Collaborate with Oneida County Economic Development and developer to support efforts to construct a Hilton Hotel on Northridge Drive in Woodruff in 2026-2027.

Objectives:

- Promote the expansion of new business opportunities and new employment opportunities.
- Collaborate with Oneida County and other local towns to promote economic development.

Policies:

- For consideration of new business, evaluate noise, traffic, odors, lighting and environmental issues as part of assessment process

CHAPTER 7: LAND USE

This chapter of the Town of Woodruff Comprehensive Plan addresses the land use portion of the plan. This chapter is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(h) Wis. Stats.] for a "compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property." This chapter reviews existing land uses, trends, programs, and proposes future land uses. (See Map 7-1 Land Use.)

EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY

Current land use activity in the town is characterized by residential, commercial and institutional development in the "panhandle" with a majority of the township adjacent to the "panhandle" comprised of forestlands making up part of the Northern Highlands American Legion State Forest. Some privately held parcels of land are interspersed with the forestlands. These areas are mainly associated with Tomahawk, Hasbrook, Gilmore and Buffalo lakes and contain significant residential development. The area between Tomahawk Lake and State Highway 47 is the largest and has the most significant residential and some commercial development.

The majority of the town is woodlands at 16,696 acres or 72%. Approximately 13,040 of those acres are state forest land. Water covers about 20% of the town. The next

most significant land use type is residential at 4.1%. The other land uses combined are only about 4% of the total area.

Table 7-1 presents the current breakdown of land-use types within the town.

LAND USE TRENDS

LAND SUPPLY

The presence of the Northern Highlands-American Legion State Forest, limits the supply of land available for development or other uses. In the short term, there appears to be privately held, undeveloped land to meet the town's needs. Long term, however, availability of land may affect the town's ability to grow.

LAND DEMAND

Table 7-1: Existing Land Use		
Land Use	Acres	Percent
Agriculture	14	0.06%
Commercial	132	0.58%
Government/Institution.	66	0.29%
Industrial	19	0.08%
Open Land	401	1.77%
Outdoor Recreation	69	0.30%
Residential	934	4.11%
Transportation	205	0.90%
Water	4,623	20.36%
Woodlands	16,248	71.54%
Total	22,711	100%

Source: NCWRPC, Town of Woodruff

RESIDENTIAL:

Previous projected growth in households was not realized. Resulting from the real estate market fluctuation over the past 20 years, and impact of the covid epidemic, households in Woodruff remained consistent, decreasing by 6%, over 2000.

Seasonal housing continues to comprise about 40% of the total units within the Town. Although existing seasonal homes are being converted to full-time permanent residences, it is assumed for planning purposes that new seasonal units will remain a stable proportion, with a fair percentage of seasonal properties being converted to short term rentals year-round.

INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL:

Industrial use within the town is primarily scattered non-metallic mining operations. By their nature, non-metallic mining operations expand overtime, and as existing pits are closed, new pits will open. As a result, the amount of industrial land attributed to non-metallic mining is anticipated to fluctuate but remain fairly constant at about 19 acres over the planning period.

Commercial development is subject to market forces and difficult to predict. Commercial development waxes and wanes as new businesses open, and existing businesses close or relocate. Commercial growth continues to be sporadic. It is estimated that commercial growth will continue slowly with a goal of occupancy of all existing commercial locations in the downtown area.

The total acreage of agricultural land is minimal within the Town of Woodruff and it is anticipated to remain stable over the planning period. Table 8-2 shows the projected increase of residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural land uses in 5-year increments from 2010 to 2030.

Table 7-2: Projected Land Use Demand to 2030

	2020	2025	2030
Residential Acreage Demand	844	886	920
Industrial/Commercial Acreage Demand	239	283	327
Agricultural Acreage Demand	14	14	14

Source: Projected 1% growth per year for residential and commercial

LAND VALUE

Overall equalized land values in the town have increased about 114% over 2008. Table 7-3 shows the Equalized Land Values in the Town of Woodruff comparing 2000, 2008, and 2023 values as reported by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

Table 7-3: Town of Woodruff Equalized Land Values

Type of Property	2000	2008	2023
Residential	44,236,700	105,894,700	205,625,600
Commercial	6,010,200	12,955,600	18,581,300
Manufacturing	17,400	19,300	27,600
Agricultural	0	0	--
Undeveloped	39,500	22,100	46,400
Ag. Forest	0	0	--
Forest	1,653,000	2,966,200	2,018,400
Other	0	0	--
Total Value	51,956,800	121,857,900	226,299,300

Source: WI Department of Revenue

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

There is potential for the redevelopment and reuse of sites and buildings in the downtown area. This becomes critical for future growth and development of the Town because of the lack of developable land.

There are a number of properties in Town that contain environmental contamination and are still in use. See the Natural, Agricultural, and Cultural Resources and Economic Development chapters regarding these sites. Quarries have a built-in redevelopment mechanism via reclamation regulations. Most existing quarries within the Town have a number of years of life left. Reclamation to a useable state is required upon closure of any quarry.

EXISTING AND POTENTIAL LAND USE CONFLICTS

Unkempt or poorly maintained buildings and properties including accumulating junk and vehicles have been generally labeled as “eyesores” and identified as a conflict issue by the Town Planning Commission. Other areas of land use conflict within the Town include agricultural activity (i.e. hobby farms) adjacent to residential development and quarry activities adjacent residential development. This plan seeks to avoid or minimize potential future land use conflicts through controlled development, planned use-buffers and public information and education components.

FUTURE LAND USE 2009-2029

Town of Woodruff Plan Commission members participated in a mapping exercise and developed a generalized land use plan map as a tool to guide the Town's growth. The land use map is found at the end of the chapter. The Future Land Use map represents recommendations for lands within the Town. The map is advisory and does not have the authority of zoning, it is intended to reflect community desires and serve as a guide for local officials to coordinate future development of the Town.

LAND USE MAP CLASSIFICATIONS:

Land use classifications describe a collection of land uses and are designed to be compatible with each other. The classifications are not zoning districts and do not have the authority of zoning, but are intended for use as a guide when making land use and zoning decisions.

Residential - Areas recommended for residential development typically consisting of smaller lot sizes.

Rural Residential - Areas that are recommended for less dense residential development, consisting of larger minimum lot sizes than the residential category. These areas will also allow a mixture of residential uses, and provide a good transition from more dense development to the rural countryside.

Residential Retail - Areas recommended for residential development, as well as allowing for existing commercial establishments located within this classification.

Commercial - Areas recommended for commercial development.

Industrial - Areas recommended for “light” industrial development.

Governmental/Public/Institutional - Identifies areas and facilities that are

designated for the public good. For example: utilities, community facilities, schools, and governmental buildings.

Forest - Areas of large woodlands.

Transportation - Identifies the existing road network along with the recommendations for improved and safe traffic movement in the town.

Preservation & Open Space - Contains sensitive environmental areas, such as 100-year floodplains as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, DNR wetlands, steep slopes of 12 percent or greater and open water. This area could include endangered species habitat or other significant features or areas identified by the Town, including cultural resource areas.

Chapter 7: Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: Promote health, safety and welfare of town residents while maintaining orderly planned growth, efficient use of land and public services, facilities and tax dollars.

Objectives:

- Promote development that preserves the rural character of the town
- Minimize groundwater impact

Policies

- Maintain the comprehensive plan to serve as a guide for future land use.
- Assess impact on environment when planning new development.
- Encourage new commercial development in existing downtown district.
- Collaborate with adjacent towns, county and state in land use planning.

CHAPTER 8: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

The Intergovernmental Cooperation chapter discusses the potential benefits of intergovernmental cooperation and analyzes the relationship of the Town of Woodruff to school districts, adjacent local governmental units, the regional planning commission, the state and other governmental units. The chapter concludes with an identification of existing or potential conflicts between the governmental units and a process to resolve such conflicts.

BENEFITS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

COST SAVINGS: Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication, and can enable communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly.

ADDRESS REGIONAL ISSUES: By communicating and organizing actions and working with county, regional, and state agencies local communities are able to

address/resolve issues which are regional in nature, including construction and maintenance of highways or planning and construction of facilities for storm water management.

EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES: Cooperation enables county and local governments and other agencies to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage, before affected interest have established rigid positions, political stakes have been raised, and before issues have become conflicts.

REDUCED LITIGATION: Community cooperation may help to resolve issues before they become involved in litigation reducing the possibility of costly litigation or unwanted outcomes.

IMPROVED UNDERSTANDING & TRUST: As communities communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

ASSESSMENT OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS, PLANS AND AGREEMENTS

SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Town of Woodruff is part of two school districts including Arbor Vitae-Woodruff Elementary and Lakeland Union High School. The elementary school is located in the Town of Arbor Vitae and Lakeland Union High School is located in Minocqua.

The main form of interaction with both school and college districts are through payment of property taxes, which help to fund both districts' operations. The town has little participation in issues pertaining to administration or sighting of new facilities. All school board meetings are open to the public.

SANITARY DISTRICT

The Lakeland Sanitary District supplies water and sewer service around the "panhandle" area of the Town of Woodruff. The district also includes parts of the towns of Minocqua and Arbor Vitae. The district is administered by an independent board of commissioners under state guidelines.

ADJACENT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Surrounding Towns

The Town of Woodruff is bordered by the towns of Minocqua, Lake Tomahawk and Newbold in Oneida County. To the north in Vilas County, Woodruff is adjacent to the Town of Arbor Vitae.

The Woodruff-Arbor Vitae jointly owned Brandy Park is managed by the Brandy Park Commission. The town fire and police departments have mutual aid with all surrounding departments. The Lakeland Airport is administered through a joint commission between towns of Woodruff, Arbor Vitae, Lac Du Flambeau, and Minocqua. The public library in the Town of Minocqua serves the surrounding area including the Town of Woodruff.

Oneida County

Oneida County directly and indirectly provides a number of services to the Town of Woodruff. The town has a good working relationship with many county departments,

including Finance, Highways, Sheriff, Parks, Planning and Zoning.

The County Highway Department maintains and plows county, state, and federal highways within the town. The town's ambulance coverage is provided by the county, as well. The sheriff manages the 911-dispatch center, not only for ambulance but also for dispatching the town fire department, EMS and police. The Planning and Zoning, Land Information and Land & Water Conservation departments administers zoning, provides land records access and land conservation services.

In many cases where state and federal agencies require area-wide planning for various programs or regulations, the County sponsors a county-wide planning effort to complete these plans and include each individual local unit in the process and resulting final plan. Examples of this include the County Outdoor Recreation plan which maintains the eligibility for WisDNR administered park and recreation development funding of each local unit of government, and All Hazard Mitigation Plans which are required by FEMA in order for individual local units of government to qualify for certain types of disaster assistance.

STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Wisconsin departments of Natural Resources and Transportation are the primary agencies the town will work with regarding development activities. Many of the goals and objectives of this plan will require continued cooperation and coordination with these agencies.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources takes a lead role in wildlife protection and sustainable management of woodlands, wetland, and other wildlife habitat areas, while Wisconsin Department of Transportation is responsible for the planning and development of state highways, railways, airports, and other transportation systems. State agencies make a number of grant and aid programs available to local units of government. Examples include local road aids, the Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP), WisDNR Stewardship program, and the Priority Watershed Program. There are also a number of legislative mandates from the State that the Town must comply with, such as the biannual pavement rating submission for the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR).

Most federal programs are administered by the state, so the town would be working with the responsible state agency with regard to federal programs and regulations.

EXISTING/POTENTIAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFLICTS

The following intergovernmental conflicts have been identified: County zoning administration.

The following potential intergovernmental conflicts have been identified:

- Issues regarding the large percentage of state forest land.
- Issues regarding communications/services corridors.
- Issues regarding invasive species and lake habitat on area lakes
- Safety and shoreline protection issues regarding no-wake boating restrictions

on area lakes.

The process for resolving these conflicts with a continuation of past practices as well as new mechanisms that will evolve. The town will continue to interact with surrounding towns when issues of mutual concern arise.

Chapter 8: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Goal 1: Encourage cooperation and collaboration with neighboring towns, Oneida County and state agencies.

Objectives:

- Promote open communication and sharing of information with other governmental units and neighboring towns.
- Support collaboration on projects where mutual benefit is identified for the parties involved.
- Maximize cost savings and minimize duplication of services where feasible.

Policies:

- Town will consider cost sharing opportunities with neighboring towns and county to determine feasibility.
- Town recognizes the need to cooperate with entities sharing legal jurisdiction.

CHAPTER 9: IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter is the final chapter of the Town of Woodruff Comprehensive Plan, and is based on the statutory requirement [§66.1001(2)(i) Wis. Stats.] for a compilation of programs and specific actions to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in the previous chapters. This chapter includes a process for updating the plan every 10 years at a minimum.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

Periodic review will be completed by the town board/plan commission, assessing land use decisions, and reviewing the goals, objectives and policies of the plan.

A comprehensive plan update is required every 10 years by state statute. At a minimum, the town board/plan commission will review each element of the plan, and statistical information will be updated. An essential characteristic of any planning program is that it reflects the needs and desires of the town's citizens.

PLAN ADOPTION/AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Amendments to this plan may include minor changes to plan text and maps, or major changes resulting from periodic or scheduled 10-year review.

A copy of the proposed plan amendment/updates will be made available to all local governmental units within and adjacent to the town and Oneida County.

The town clerk will make available the amended plan as required by state statute. The town board will conduct a public hearing to ensure citizen awareness, input and comment.

Following the public hearing, upon adoption of the comprehensive plan, the town clerk will send a copy of the amended plan to:

- All adjacent town clerks.
- Oneida County Clerk and Oneida County Planning and Zoning.
- The local library.
- Wisconsin Department of Administration.
- The North Central Regional Planning Commission.

PLAN CONSISTENCY BETWEEN CHAPTERS

The state comprehensive planning law requires that the implementation chapter describe how each chapter of the plan will be integrated and consistent with the other chapters. Preparing all chapters of the Town of Woodruff Comprehensive Plan simultaneously has ensured there are no known inconsistencies between the chapters of the plan.

CONCLUSION

The plan is intended to be a living document with periodic amendment and updates to ensure it is accurate and consistent with the needs and desires of the town.

ATTACHMENT A

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN TOWN OF WOODRUFF Public Participation Plan

Background

The town recognizes the need to engage the public in the planning process. This document sets forth the techniques the town will use to meet the goal of public participation. Therefore, this Public Participation Plan forms the basic framework for achieving an interactive dialogue between citizens, local decision makers, and staff in compliance with the State of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Legislation (66.1001)

Objectives

The following is a list of objectives for the public participation plan:

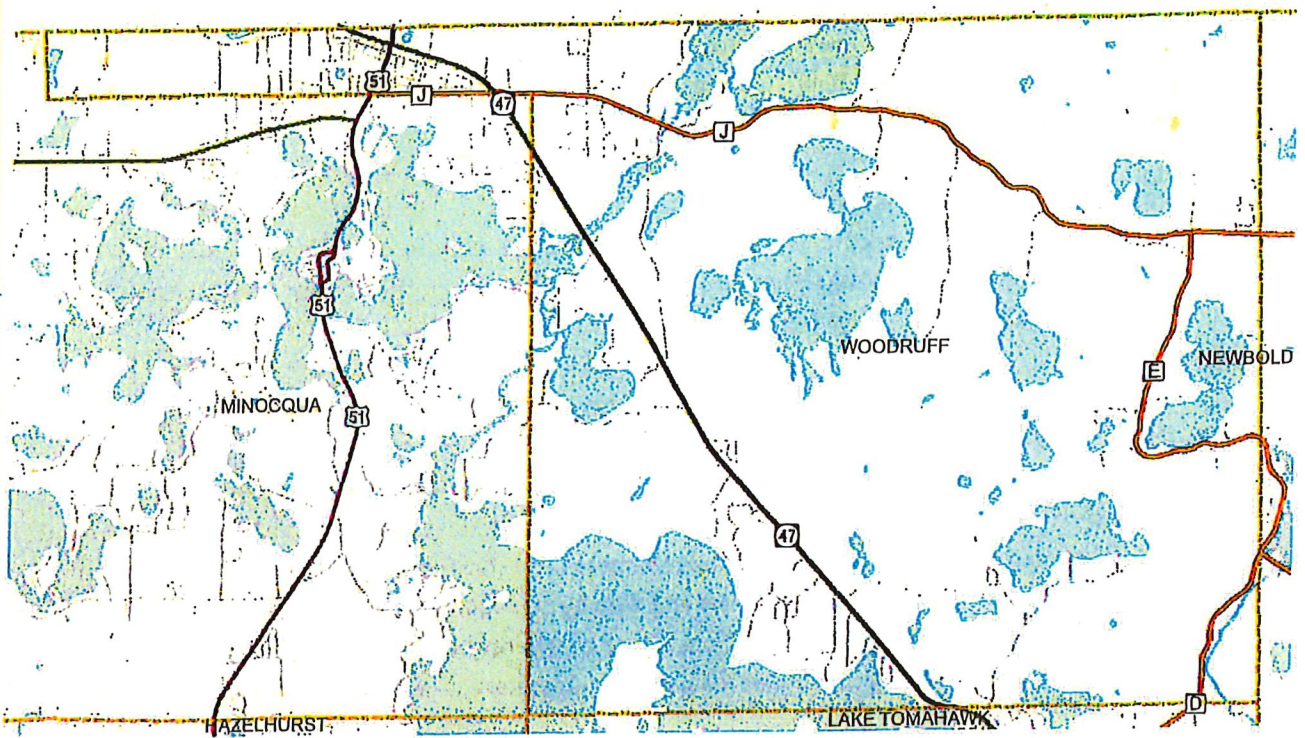
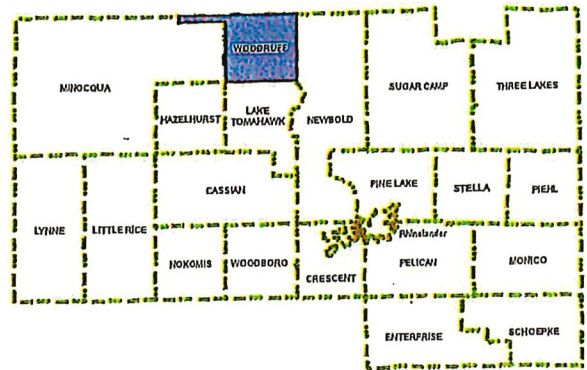
- That residents, land owners and other interested parties are aware of the importance of participating in the development of the comprehensive plan.
- That the public has opportunities to provide their input to the plan commission/town board.
- That the public has access to all written information and all maps created throughout the planning process.
- That there is input from the broadest range of perspectives and interests in the community possible.
- That input is elicited through a variety of means (electronic, printed, and oral) in such a way that it may be carefully considered and incorporated into the process.
- That this process of public involvement strengthens the sense of community.

Techniques

The public participation plan for the comprehensive planning process will incorporate the following:

- All meetings for the planning process will be posted and open to the public.
- Plan meeting handouts will be maintained by the town and available for review by the public.
- When the draft plan is prepared it will be available at the town hall and electronically on town website.
- The draft and final plan will be distributed to all surrounding communities and Oneida County.

MAPS



Vilas County

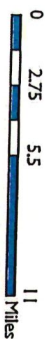
Forest County

Price County

Lincoln County

Lantern County

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Known Metallic Deposits
- Watershed Boundaries
- Wetlands
- Floodplain
- Steep Slopes
- Water

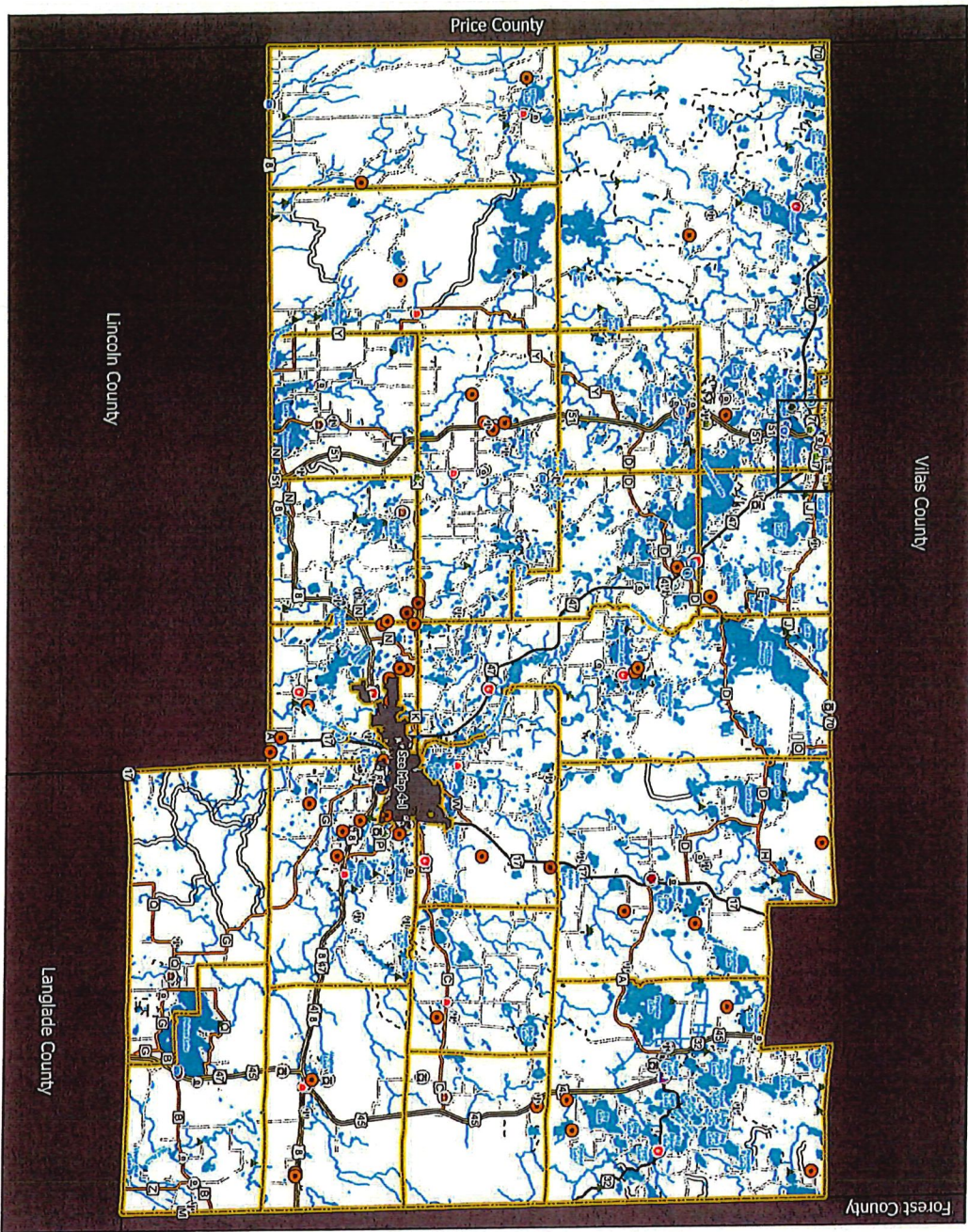


Source: Wisconsin DNR, NCMWRC, Omaha, NE
 This map is a general overview map and is not intended to be used for any specific purpose. It is not a substitute for a detailed map or a site-specific study. The map is not responsible for any errors or omissions, and it is not intended to be used for any purpose other than general information.



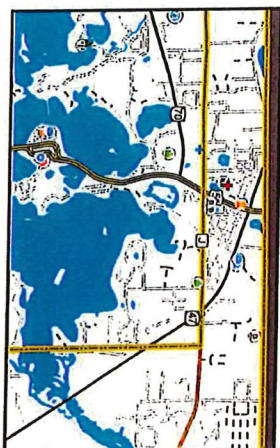
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Natural Resources



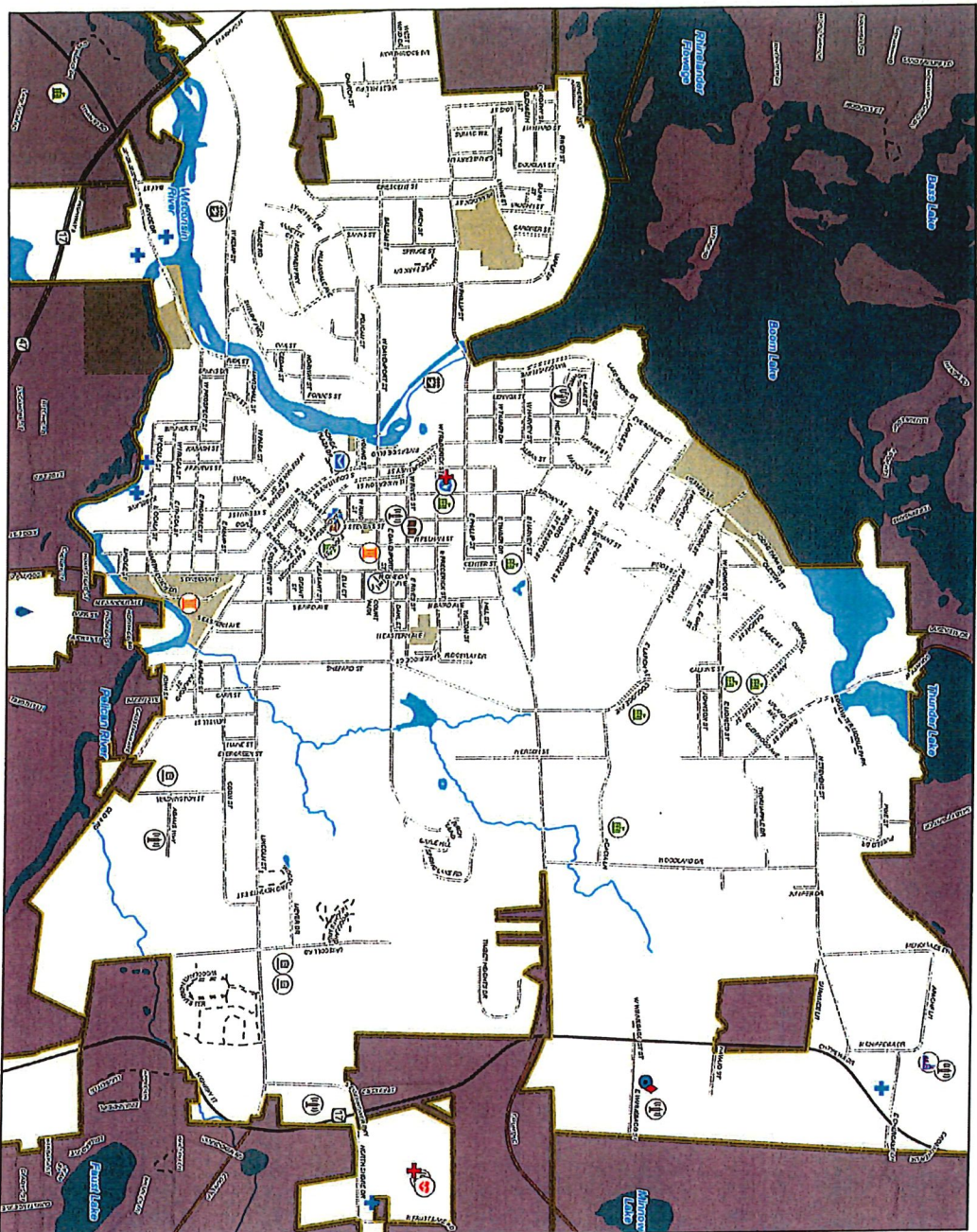
Utilities & Community Facilities

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Road
- Private Road
- Forest Road
- Water
- Dams
- Substations
- Municipal Water Supply
- Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Communication Towers
- Ambulance/Fire Station
- Cemetery
- Fire Station
- Health Services
- Industrial Park
- Landfill
- Library
- Museum
- Non-Metallic Mines
- Police Station
- Post Office
- School
- Town Hall
- Town Hall / Fire & Police Dept
- Town Hall / Fire Dept



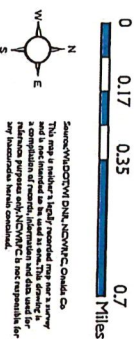
This map is a utility map and is not a survey. It is intended to provide a general overview of the location of utilities and facilities. It is not intended to be used for any purpose that requires precise location information. The user is responsible for verifying the accuracy of the information shown on this map.

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Utilities & Community Facilities

- Minor Civil Division
- US Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Parks
- Water
- Ambulance/Fire Station
- Cemetery
- City Hall
- Court House
- Emergency Operation Center
- Health Services
- Hospital
- Industrial Park
- Library
- Museum
- Police Station
- Post Office
- School
- Sheriff's Department
- Substations
- Municipal Water Supply
- Communication Towers



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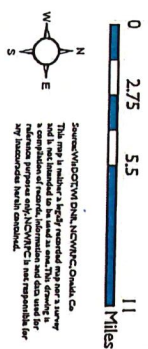
Vilas County

Forest County

Lincoln County

Lanlade County

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Railroad
- Traffic Counts
- Water
- Bike & Ped Trails
- Existing On Road Bike Route
- Existing Off Road
- Proposed On Road Bike Route
- Proposed Off Road Bike Route
- Airports
- Commercial Service
- Small General Aviation
- Air Strip



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Vilas County

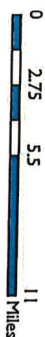
Forest County

Price County

Lincoln County

Lapland County

- Minor Civil Division
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway
- County Highway
- Local Roads
- Private Roads
- Forest Roads
- Existing Land Use
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Crabapple Bog
- Governmental / Institutional
- Industrial
- Open Lands
- Outdoor Recreation
- Residential
- Transportation
- Utility
- Woodlands
- Water



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